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U. S. MILITARY DIV. OF THE MISSOURI,
Chicago, Illinois, November 1, 1869.

General E. D. TOWSEND,
Adjutant General U. S. Army,
Washington, D. C.

GENERAL: I have the honor to submit for the information of the General-in-Chief, my annual report for the year 1869, accompanied by the annual reports of the Department Commanders.

The Military Division of the Missouri embraces the Departments of Dakota, the Platte, and the Missouri; commanded respectively by Major General W. S. HANCOCK, Brevet Major General C. C. AUGER, and Major General J. M. SCHOFIELD. These three Departments cover a territory of great extent, in which most of the civilized, semi-civilized and wild Indians abide.

The Department of Missouri embraces the States of Illinois, Iowa, Missouri and Kansas, a portion of Arkansas, the Territories of Colorado, New Mexico and the Indian Territory. In this Department are located the Cheyenne, Arapahoe, Kiowa, Comanche, Apache, Navajoe and Ute Indians; these tribes are classed as wild Indians, but most of them are now on the reservations established for them by the government. There are also in this Department the semi-civilized Osages, Sacs and Fox, Kaws, and the affiliated bands on the western edge of the Indian Territory; also, the civilized Cherokees, Choctaws and Chickasaws, &c., occupying the eastern edge of the territory. The total number of these Indians is unknown to me, but is very large.

For the peaceful regulation of these Indians when on reservations, and for the protection of the rapidly increasing white frontier settlements, the following regiments of troops at the following military posts are stationed, viz:—the 3d, 7th and 10th regiments of Cavalry, and the 3d, 5th, 6th and 15th regiments of Infantry, at Forts Leavenworth, Riley, Dodge, Harker, Hays, Zarah, Larned, Wallace, Lyon, Reynolds, Garland, Bascom, Bayard, Craig, Cummings, McRae, Selden, Stanton, Union, Wingate, Gibson, Arbuckle, Sill, Smith and Camp Supply.

The Department has been ably and economically commanded, and a condition of peace exists with all the Indians, except the Apaches, of New Mexico; efforts have been made to treat with these Indians, but without success. I consider the number of troops

in this Department, with the present reduced strength of the companies, as insufficient for the wants and best interests of the public service.

The Department of the Platte comprises the State of Nebraska, and Territories of Wyoming and Utah. The main line of travel in this Department is the Union Pacific Railroad. For the protection of this great line of road and other interests in this Department, the following regiments of troops have been assigned, and are stationed at the following named military posts:—the 2d and 5th Cavalry, and the 4th, 7th and 9th Infantry, at Forts Kearney, McPherson, Sedgwick, D. A. Russell, Laramie, Fetterman, Sanders, Fred Steele, Bridger, Omaha Barracks, Plum Creek Station, North Platte Station, Ogallala Station and Camp Douglas.

The lines of travel and the settlements in the Department have been subjected to incursions from not only the large body of Indians residing in the Department, but from the Indians belonging to the Departments of the Missouri and the Dakota; and during the past year the troops have been kept in constant activity. For the details of their operations, I respectfully refer to the accompanying report of Brevet Major General AVARU. The post of Camp Douglas, at Salt Lake City, resembles somewhat the position of an American Consulate in a foreign city—a place where persecuted gentiles can take refuge, and have protection under the American flag. The command has been economically and very successfully administered during the past year. The number of troops would be sufficient for the wants of the public service, if the companies were kept filled to their maximum.

The Department of Dakota embraces the State of Minnesota, and the Territories of Dakota and Montana. It has a large number of Indians within its limits; most of those west of the Missouri may be safely classed as hostile. It is also subjected at times to incursions from the Indians living north of the British line. In it, is the long line of the Upper Missouri river with its extensive commercial interests, and the rapidly extending settlements in Montana; also, the northern settlements of Minnesota. For the protection of the various interests connected with this Department there are stationed at the following posts the following regiments of troops:—at Forts Snelling, Ripley, Abercrombie, Wadsworth, Ransom, Sully, Rice, Shaw, Ellis and Camp Cooke, the 13th, 20th and 22d Infantry, and detachment of the 2d Cavalry.

The Department has been economically administered and ably

commanded, but I deem the number of troops inadequate for the proper protection of the various interests at stake. A great many of the settlers in Montana have been murdered, and five or six hundred head of stock captured and run off within the last fifty days, and much bitter complaint has been made by the settlers on account of non-protection; the few troops stationed in Montana being insufficient to meet the wants of the case.

There has also been a great deal of trouble along the Missouri river, and a number of people murdered in the vicinity of the military posts. The friendly Indians, and the Agents and employees at Big Cheyenne, Grand river, and Whetstone Agencies have been in jeopardy on several occasions, as the wild Indians have, at times, had their own way—driving the employees into the Agency buildings, taking possession of the annuity goods, and killing the cattle. Steps have been taken to remedy these evils as far as we can, by the erection of block houses. The post at Fort Buford has been in a state of siege for two or three years. In the early spring I hope to be able to send a few troops from the Department of the Platte to the Department of Dakota.

Although there have been numerous depredations in the Department of Dakota, and some, in fact, in all the Departments, still the condition of Indian affairs is very much better than last year. The policy of reservations adopted by the Indian Department, is, in my judgment, the only policy that will put an end to Indian murders and depredations. I think that it may be necessary to punish some of the Sioux, as the Cheyennes and other tribes south had to be punished, before peace can be fully established, and the reservation system made a success; but every effort will be made to avoid any necessity of this kind, with the strong hope that the savages may settle down on their reservation, and adopt a more peaceful and civilized life.

The Indians have run riot along the lines of our western settlements and the emigrant and commercial lines of travel for many years—murdering and plundering without any adequate punishment, and the government has heretofore sought to give protection to some of its best interests by making presents to these savages; or in other words, while it found it necessary to enact the most stringent laws for the government of civilized whites, it was attempting to govern a wild, brutal and savage people, without any laws at all, or the infliction of any punishment for the most heinous crimes. This system was not a success. If a white man commits murder

or robs, we hang him or send him to the penitentiary; if an Indian does the same, we have been in the habit of giving him more blankets.

The Indian is a lazy, idle vagabond; he never labors, and has no profession except that of arms, to which he is raised from a child; a scalp is constantly dangled before his eyes, and the highest honor he can aspire to is, to possess one taken by himself. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, if he aims for this honor when he grows up, especially if there is no punishment to follow the barbarous act.

The government has always been very liberal to Indians, especially whenever they have settled on reservations: the lands allotted to them have been of the very best character, making them perhaps by far the richest communities in the country.

The system of supplying the wild bands, under the present Indian management, is working well—the Indian gets all that the government intends him to have; he cannot now plead bad faith, and if he does not now give up his cruel and destructive habits, I see no other way to save the lives and property of our people, than to punish him until peace becomes a desirable object.

The troops at the different posts throughout the Military Division are quartered (officers and men) comfortably. The expenses for the coming year will be much less than for the past; however, a very large portion of the expenses of the last year were properly chargeable to the Indian Department.

I cannot close this report without expressing my very high appreciation of the efficient management of the present Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and assure him that every effort will be made by the military to assist him in his difficult and highly responsible duties.

I am, General, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) P. H. Sheridan.

Lieutenant General U. S. Army.

Official

Chas. A. Wright.

Lt Col. Mil. Sec.

Bat Brig Gen U. S. A.